

St Nicholas of Myra School

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Term 3 Week 1
2015



**Grandparents
Day
Friday
24 July**

1:40pm Liturgy

**2:15 Book Fair
&
Afternoon Tea**

**2:45 Open
Classrooms**

**Saturday
29th August**



Dear St Nicholas of Myra Families,

During the Term 2 holidays, we celebrated NAIDOC week. NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920's which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians.

NAIDOC Week is held in the first full week of July. This is why often it can be overlooked, however it is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements and is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society. You may have participated in local events in Penrith.

Aboriginal Spirituality was very much at the forefront of my mind as I was able to fulfil one of my dreams to visit Uluru (Ayers Rock), Kuta Juta (The Olgas) and Kings Canyon (a 6 km walk/500 + rocky stair climb I am proud to say I completed!). Seeing these massive ancient natural wonders had me really reflecting on the vastness of our great land as well as time. These natural Australian wonders were present well beyond my existence.



Uluru, this beautiful landform absorbs and reflects the light of time, and stands with a timelessness that surpasses life itself. This Australian icon had a profound affect on, through and within me. It moved me to ponder and reflect on life before me... to ponder on an Australian Spirituality as well as Aboriginal Spirituality and how this differs from my spirituality.

Aboriginal Spirituality is derived from the concept of the Dreaming where its roots lie in a variety of stories, ceremonies, values and structures. The Dreaming is a complex network of knowledge, faith and practices that derive from stories of Creation and it dominates all spiritual and physical aspects of Aboriginal life.

The Dreaming set out the structures of society, the rules for social behaviour and the ceremonies performed in order to maintain the life of the land. It governed the way people lived and how they should behave. Those who did not follow the rules were punished. The Dreaming tells the journeys of the Spirit Ancestors who made the world and whose Spirits inhabit the features of the natural world today; it influences every aspect of daily life and permeates song, dance, storytelling, painting, artefacts making, hunting, food gathering and a social kinship system; it also determines relationship with every living creature and features of the land.

Aborigines believe that they do not own the land but are part of it. Therefore, they have the duty to respect and maintain the land for it is alive within the Spirit of their Ancestors. The land is their Ancestors and the source of their Dreaming; it contains sacred sites for which they are responsible. Land is central to their cultural life and is the basis of their economic life; control over land is the means of gaining control over their lives.

In 1877, German Lutheran Missionaries established a Mission in Central Australia at Hermannsburg. In 1926 Pastor Albrecht made this observation: "When we first came here, we thought we had found the only people in the world without religion. Now, we have learnt that they are amongst the most religious people in the world." These missionaries, like the English Colonists before them, found no recognisable structures that provided a formal point for Aboriginal religious observance. Mrs Wadjuelarbinna, Elder Doomadgee for North Queensland, has this wonderful insight into Aboriginal Spirituality and Christianity:

My mother said they close their eyes in church, they go in there and talk to Spirit; this one they call God, must be the same one belong you and me; and they started to work out their Spirituality there; it's a bit different and she couldn't understand why they made a grand building especially to go to on Sunday to talk to this Spirit, and every other day of the week they could do what they wanted to. And she said, poor silly buggers, they make a house to go in and talk; he's not going to lock up there, he's everywhere; he's in the bush he's where we're fishing, he's where we're hunting; every second of the day we're answerable to that Spirit." A.B.C. Radio 1999.



The above insight is added to by Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann: "Jesus lived and taught a life of sharing because he loved all without exception. Such love is the measure of true sharing; the sharing of Jesus strikes a resonance in my Aboriginal self and is a cause for rejoicing and celebration."

This importance of land in the life and spirituality of Aboriginal people is forcefully expressed by Michael Dodson, Australian of the Year in 2009, when he speaks of the need to begin with the land:

"To understand our law, our culture and our relationship to the physical and spiritual world, you must begin with the land. Everything about Aboriginal Society is inextricably interwoven with, and connected to the land, and the spirituality of the Aboriginal people, our culture, beliefs or reason for existence, is the land. You take that away and you take away the reason for our existence. We have grown up on and with the land. We are dancing, singing and painting for the land. We are celebrating the land. Removed from the land, we are literally removed from ourselves."

The following statement from the National Aboriginal Conference gives echo to Michael Dodson's words: "The land, for us, is a vibrant spiritual landscape. It is peopled in spirit form, by the ancestors in the Dreaming. The ancestors travelled the country in adventure which created the people, the natural features of the land, the code of life. The law has been passed onto us through the reverence and celebration of the sites of the ancestors." Identity. Vol.4 No.4.

"Lord, guide us, to learn to be one with all Creation as the Aboriginals and St Francis of Assisi. Help us to value the Australian land and animals. Amen."

Peace and Joy

Anita Knezevic

Principal

Quality Catholic Schools Survey

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta participated in the Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) project earlier this year. This provides data from students, staff and parents about our school's cultural behaviour, relationships and learning community assists us to focus our efforts for improvement by building on our successes to date.

Each year 60 randomly selected parents, Stage 3 students and all staff complete this survey. From this survey, Catholic Culture is valued by all stakeholders. Our staff place high importance on the Catholic Culture and the strong connectedness to our Parish. Stage 3 students reflected that they would like more opportunities to lead Social Justice. Parents feel more engaged with the school and that there are more opportunities for their engagement. Parents were very positive in their attitude when completing the survey. I would like to thank all participants for taking the time to complete this survey and provide this feedback to our school.

Term 2 Survey

Since my arrival, each Term 2 Interview period, I survey the parents and carers to seek various perspectives and opinions about different areas of our school. I would like to thank you all of the Parents and Carers who completed this Survey provided at the Term 2 Interview mornings, afternoons and nights. The results from this survey will be published in the next newsletter.

Term 3 Staff Development Day

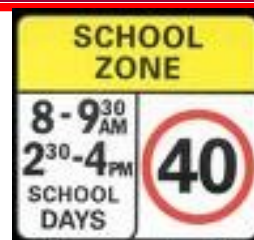
Before the end of Term 2, all parents and carers were notified about this term's Staff Development Day on **Thursday 30 July 2015**. As all staff will be active participants there will be no teacher supervision on site.



School Zones

I would like to remind all our parents that school zones remain in place for the safety of our children and families. School zones operate on all gazetted schools days, which are all days the school is open, even pupil free days. For most NSW Catholic schools, school zones operate as normal until (and include) the last day of school for the term and have resumed since Monday 13, July 2015, whether students are present or not.

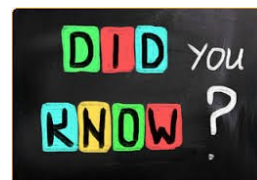
Parent and Carers that are waiting in the Staff Carpark to collect their children in the afternoon please refrain from leaning on parked cars. *Thank you*



Thank you to all those families who have supported this fundraiser. So far we have raised \$708.94. We are still waiting on 15 families to return their money or unsold chocolates. Please return to school office ASAP.

Year 6 Cup Cake and lolly guessing competition has raised \$221.40. These funds will assist with costs for their Graduation Celebrations.

Each fortnight, from the beginning of this term, I have decided to add a 'Did you know?' section to our Newsletter. The purpose for this to provide short pieces of information about learning in our school.



Our whole school EACH DAY, engages in,

- ♦ over 100 minutes of English learning
- ♦ 30 minutes of Religion
- ♦ 60 minutes of Mathematics learning
- ♦ then 90 minutes of learning across the week in different Key Learning Areas (KLAS) of Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE), Science and Technology (S&T), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE).

ATHLETICS CARNIVAL

On Tuesday 23 June, K-6 travelled to Parker Street ovals to compete in our school Athletics carnival. All students participated in the day either by running in races, competing in long jump or having fun at novelty events. At the conclusion of the carnival all points were tallied from throughout the day and **HACKETT** were announced as the winners of the 2015 Athletics carnival. Congratulations to all the students who competed in order to get points for their team.

The day could not go ahead without the help and support of the parents who volunteered their time to assist on the day. A special thank you to all of those parents who were timekeeping and helping at long jump and novelties. Thank you to Mrs Hinchliff, Mrs Cutajar, Miss Biasi and Miss H who worked after school hours to organise the day and ensure all students were entered into a race.

Congratulations to the following students who were announced as champions and runners up on the day:

Junior Girl Champion- Raphaila Idris

Junior Girl Runner Up- Darcy Brown

Junior Boy Champion- William Ezekiel

Junior Boy Runner Up- Jai Parkes

Senior Girl Champion- Cleo Price

Senior Girl Runner Up- Bonnie May Wheeler and Jasmine Culley

Senior Boy Champion- Moses Ezekiel

Senior Boy Runner Up- Callum Wamsley and Yousha Majdoub

The Zone athletics team will be announced in the coming weeks.

See photos
Page 5

Correspondence which has been sent home in the past fortnight or with this newsletter includes:

- ☺ Earn and Learn Sticker Sheet
- ☺ Father's Day Order Form
- ☺ Term 3 Calendar



The Catholic Diocese of Parramatta wants to hear from you

If you or someone close to you has suffered **ANY** abuse by a representative of the Catholic Church (school, parish, other Catholic group) in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains we invite you to contact us. Our professional staff will listen to your experience, respect your confidentiality and discuss all available options.

You can contact us on:

Phone: (02) 9933 0233
 Web: www.parra.catholic.org.au/safeguarding
 Email: safeguarding@parra.catholic.org.au
 Mail: PO BOX 3066 North Parramatta, NSW, 1750

For any complaints that may relate to criminal conduct we encourage you to contact **NSW Police on 1800 333 000**

School Times

What time does morning supervision commence?

8:30 am

What time does school commence?

9:00 am

When do children eat lunch? **11:00 – 11:40 am**

When do children have fruit break? **1:10 - 1:40 pm**

What time does school finish? **3:10 pm**

Kindergarten

Kalai Beedle
 Dominic Conde
 Benjamin Dela Paz
 Vincent Goncalves

Year 1 – Blue

Rachel Idris
 Michaela Perera
 Richard Reales
 Lara White

Year 1 – Gold

Julian Falzon
 Shabeena Shajikumar
 Isabella Surene
 Benjamin Walker

Year 2 – Blue

Shelby Bac
 Katherine Faustino
 Skye Haladus
 Ruari Brown

Year 2 – Gold

Elyssa Greentree
 Maya Janus
 Monique Knight
 Mia Simmons

Year 3

Aaliyah Bailey
 Levi Briggs
 Jai Parkes
 Lilly Vlores

Year 4

Lucas Dankha
 Charbel Finianos
 Christian Finianos
 Elizabeth Sommers

Year 5

Mariah Nicholopoulos
 Caleb Parkes
 Owen Smith
 Jasmine Teuma

Year 6

Ben Cavanagh
 Jed Prior
 Bailey Thomson
 Bonnie-May Wheeler

Personal Best Certificates

Kindergarten – Marial Meshwang
 Year 1 Blue – Nathan Howden
 Year 1 Gold – Monette Banda
 Year 2 Blue – Peter Xiberras
 Year 2 Gold – Andrew Mrsic
 Year 3- Isabelle Sharpe
 Year 4 – Elle Moore
 Year 5 – Callum Wamsley
 Year 6 – Lachlan Tully



SILVER AWARDS

William Brown
 Alec Carter
 Jai Parkes
 Katherine Faustino
 Monique Knight
 Mae Price
 Darcy Wheeler
 Lucy Keane

St Nicholas of Myra Awards

William Brown
 Raphaila Idris

GOLD AWARDS

William Brown
 Yousha Majdoub
 Jai Parkes
 Lucy Keane



Truth Through Learning